

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 17340

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, IT, NATO

SUBJECT: ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS ON EC SUMMIT AND NATO
MINISTERIAL

REF: ROME 17324

SUMMARY: IN A LONG (55 MINUTES) AND RELAXED CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER MORO ON DECEMBER 14, HE CONFIRMED TO ME THE FAVORABLE ITALIAN IMPRESSIONS OF THE EC SUMMIT (REFEEL), AND ADDED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE NAC MINISTERIAL. MORO ALSO GAVE ME HIS VIEWS ON THE PROSPECTS FOR THE CURRENT TWO-PARTY ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IN THIS FIRST MEETING WITH ME SINCE THE INSTALLATION OF HIS FOURTH GOVERNMENT (SEPTTEL).
END SUMMARY.

1. IN OPENING MY EXCHANGE WITH MORO ON THE RECENT EC SUMMIT, I CONGRATULATED HIM ON HIS KEY ROLE IN EFFECTING
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THE COMPROMISE ON THE QUESTION OF UK RENEGOTIATIONS, AND

OBSERVED THAT ON THE WHOLE THE SUMMIT APPEARED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN COMPARISON WITH THE LIMITED EXPECTATIONS GENERALLY VOICED IN EC CIRCLES BEFORE THE MEETING. MORO RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT IN FACT THE SUMMIT HAD BEEN QTE EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL UNQTE NOT ONLY FOR THE GENERAL PROGRESS ACHIEVED BUT ALSO FOR THE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION THAT THE REGIONAL FUND HAS FINALLY BE ESTABLISHED. IN REPLYING TO MY QUESTION REGARDING THE ADEQUACY OF THE AMOUNT EARMARKED FOR ITALY, MORO SAID THAT HE WAS ENTIRELY SATISFIED. HE SAID EVERYTHING MUST HAVE A BEGINNING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGIONAL FUND WITH ITS PRESENT EARMARKED AMOUNTS IS A GOOD START. HE REMARKED IT WILL TAKE TIME TO PLAN THE UTILIZATION OF THE REGIONAL FUND, AND THAT AFTER 2 OR 3 YEARS THE QUESTION OF AN INCREASE IN AMOUNTS CAN BE RAISED AS APPROPRIATE. FOR THE MOMENT ITALY IS SATISFIED.

2. TURNING TO THE MORE GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE EC SUMMIT, MORO SAID THAT THE OVERALL SPIRIT IN WHICH THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MET WAS QTE EXCELLENT UNQTE. MOREOVER, HE VERY MUCH WELCOMED THE FACT THAT FUTURE MEETINGS OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ON A REGULAR 3-TIMES-A-YEAR BASIS. IN MORO'S VIEW, MEETINGS AT ABOUT THAT FREQUENCY WOULD BE USEFUL, AND THEIR REGULARLY SCHEDULED NATURE WOULD REMOVE THE PITFALL CREATED BY THE EXPECTATIONS WHICH INEVITABLY PRECEDE SPECIALLY SCHEDULED SUMMIT MEETINGS. MORO WAS ALSO PLEASED THAT WILL BRANDT'S SUGGESTION FOR A TWO-TIER STRUCTURE OF EC MEMBERSHIP DID NOT COME UP. MORO'S DIM VIEW OF THE SUGGESTION, WHICH HE PROBABLY SEES AS A PROPOSAL FOR SECOND CLASS EC CITIZENSHIP FOR ITALY, WAS REFLECTED IN HIS COMMENT THAT A POLITICIAN OUT OF POWER HAS TO FIGHT FOR WHATEVER PRESS ATTENTION HE CAN GET.

3. FINALLY, MORO SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PLEASED WITH THE WAY THE NAC MINISTERIAL HAD DEVELOPED. IN MORO'S VIEW, IT WAS APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY TO CONFRONT NOT ONLY MILITARY BUT ALSO ECONOMIC, AND PARTICULARLY ENERGY PROBLEMS. I CONCURRED AND TOOK THE OCCASION TO REITERATE OUR CONVICTION THAT NATO MUST MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN A STRONG DEFENSIVE POSTURE MILITARILY AND ECONOMICALLY, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND THAT A STRONG NATO IS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DETENTE. I UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVENTIONAL READINESS, AND NOTED ITALY'S KEY POSITION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF THE ALLIANCE. WITH REFERENCE TO ITALY'S IMPORTANCE, I NOTED NATO'S PROBLEMS ON THE NORTHERN LITTORAL FROM TURKEY TO PORTUGAL, AND MY REFERENCE TO THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY THE PARTICIPATION OF A COMMUNIST MINISTER IN THE GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL WAS NOT LOST ON THE

PRIME MINISTER.

4. OUR MEETING CONCLUDED WITH MORO'S OBSERVATION THAT COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION WITHIN NATO AND THE EC ARE FUNCTIONING WELL, AND THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE EXPECTS FURTHER PROGRESS IN GENERAL IN EC AND ATLANTIC AFFAIRS WILL BE FACILITATED THEREBY. VOLPE

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